

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0970

UNCLAS MANAGUA 4054

FOR ARA/MGT

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: AFSP, NU
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INCREASED SHIPPING ALLOWANCE

REF: (A) MANAGUA 3745, (B) STATE 205156, (C) TA 6-67525, 7/6/76

1. PLEASE CONSIDER THIS AS REQUEST BY FSO A. IRWIN RUBENSTEIN, DCM, MANAGUA, FOR EXCEPTION TO FS TRAVEL REGULATIONS IN ACCORD WITH 6 FAM 121.1-4. TRANSMITTAL BY OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM WOULD BE UNSATISFACTORY SINCE IT NOW OVER ONE MONTH SINCE EMPLOYEE'S EFFECTS WERE PACKED; SHIPMENT IS BEING DELAYED PENDING DETERMINATION IN THIS CASE.

2. RUBENSTEIN, AS FSO-3 WITH FOUR (4) DEPENDENTS, IS ENTITLED TO COMBINELESHIPPING AND STORAGE ALLOWANCE OF 13,000 LBS, PER 6 FAM 62.2, AND REGULAR LIMITED SHIPMENT OF 4,600 LBS. REPORTED NET WEIGHT OF EFFECTS FOR STORAGE UNDER REF TA IS 3,500 LBS, NET WEIGHT OF EFFECTS FOR SHIPMENT TO POST IS 6,260; TOTAL FOR SHIPMENT AND STORAGE IS 9,760 LBS, AN AMOUNT WELL WITHIN COMBINED ALLOWANCE.

3. PRIOR TO PACKING DATE AND WHILE STILL IN WASHINGTON, RUBENSTEIN REVIEWED INVENTORY OF DCM RESIDENCE, MANAGUA, AND CONSULTED POST BY TELEPHONE. ACCORDING TO ALL INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO HIM, RESIDENCE WAS LARGE, SPARSELY, IF "ADQUATELY", FURNISHED WITH MAJOR FURNITURE ITEMS, BUT DID NOT CONTAIN WALL HANGINGS OR OTHER DECORATIONS OF ANY KIND WHICH WOULD ENHANCE ITS USE FOR REPRESENTATION PURPOSES (ONLY STANDARD GSA ISSUE ASHTRAYS ARE AVAILABLE IN "REPRESENTATION" AREA OF HOUSE). THE FIVE BEDROOMS REQUIRE EXTRA LINEN AND A VARIETY
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OF TOWELS AND BATH LINEN IS ALSO NEEDED. WHILE THE INVENTORY SHOWS

A LARGE SUPPLY OF TABLE LINEN, THAT SUPPLY CONSISTS IN THE MAIN OF SMALL BRIDGE CLOTHS AND NAPKINS, MANY OF WHICH ARE OF LITTLE VALUE UNLESS CARD TABLES ARE TO BE USED FOR OFFICIAL ENTERTAINING. RUBENSTEIN WAS ALSO AWARE THAT MANAGUA IS A HARDSHIP POST, THAT AMERICAN-NICARAGUAN SCHOOL (IN WHICH HIS THREE CHILDREN ARE ENROLLED) HAS NO LIBRARY FACILITY, AND THAT ENGLISH-LANGUAGE BOOKS ARE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN HERE. WITH ALL INFORMATION AT XVHAND, RUBENSTEIN HAD PACKED ASSORTED WALL HANGINGS, BRIC-A-BRAC, ASHTRAYS, ETC., TO DECORATE AND PERSONALIZE RESIDENCE. IN ADDITIN, HE INCLUDED BOOKS FOR SELF AND FAMILY MEMBERS, MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS (INCLUDING A PIANO), AND A STEREO SET AND ASSORTED EXTRA BED AND BATH LINEN. THESE ITEMS, WHEN ADDED TO THOSE NORMALLY REQUIRED BY FAMILY OF FIVE, INCLUDING TWO TEEN-AGERS, WERE STILL ESTIMATED BY PACKER AT 3,900 LBS. AND RUBENSTEIN ASSUMED THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM WITH SHIPMENT. ACCORDINGLY HE TOOK NO EXTRAORDINARY STEPS IN REGARD TO SHIPMENT BEFORE LEAVING WASHINGTON.

4. POST BELIEVES THAT EXCEPTION IS FULLY JUSTIFIED IN RUBENSTEIN'S CASE AND REQUESTS ARA/MGT'S ENDORSEMENT OF THIS REQUEST FOR EXCEPTION AND EXPEDITIOUS FAVORABLE ACTION BY COMMITTEE ON EXCEPTIONS. FYI: WE PROPOSE WORK WITH FBO TO OBTAIN DECORATIVE ITEMS TO PRECLUDE RECURRENCE OF THIS SITUATION. WE WISH TO EMPHASIZE THAT PROBLEM DOES NOT INVOLVE MAJOR PIECES OF FURNITURE, THEIR QUALITY OR QUANITTY, BUT THOSE SMALLER, EQUALLY NECESSARY, ITEMS WHICH GIVE RESIDENCE REPRESENTATIONAL TONE THAT IS BOTH PERSONAL AND TASTEFUL. END FYI.
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